

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04

CEA-01 L-03 H-02 DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 /084 W

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R 060540Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1755

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG

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HONG KONG FOR TREASURY REP

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, TH

SUBJ: BUDGET BILL PASSES FIRST READING

REF: A) BANGKOK 21813, B) BANGKOK A-154

1. AFTER AN ALL-DAY DEBATE, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, BEFORE MIDNIGHT, AUGUST 5, APPROVED THE FIRST READING OF THE FISCAL 1977 BUDGET. THE HOUSE APPOINTED A 35 MEMBER BUDGET SCUTINY COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF 31 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, A PORTION ACCORDING TO THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FULL HOUSE AND TWO OFFICIALS EACH FROM THE BUREAU OF THE BUDGET AND THE FINANCE MINISTRY.

2. THE VOTE WAS 220 TO 54. THE DEMOCRAT'S PARTNERS IN THE COALITION GOVERNMENT KEPT THEIR PLEDGE TO VOTE SOLIDLY FOR THE BUDGET

AND A NUMBER OF MINOR PARTY MPS ALSO VOTED YES.

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3. OPPOSITION LEADER BUNCHU ROTCHANASATHIAN LED THE ATTACK ON THE BUDGET. IN AN UNNECESSARY SLUR, HE SAID THAT THE BILL APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN DRAFTED BY AN INCOMPETENT OLD MAN. THE 69-YEAR-OLD MINISTER OF FINANCE, SAWIT, CHOSE TO TAKE THE REMARK PERSONALLY. SINCE MOST OF THE WORK ON THIS BUDGET WAS COMPLETED UNDER BUNCHU, EVEN BEFORE THE SENI GOVERNMENT HAD A CHANCE TO REVIEW IT, BUNCHU WAS, IN REALITY, ENJOYING THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTACK THE SAME PROPOSALS HE WOULD HAVE BEEN DEFENDING YESTERDAY WERE HE STILL FINACE MINISTER. HE SAID THAT THE BILL DID NOT SPECIFICALLY INDICATE HOW THE GOVERNMENT WAS GOING TO IMPROVE THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE AVERAGE THAI AND WHEN. IT ALSO DID NOT INCLUDE CLEAR MEASURES FOR DEALING WITH SUCH PROBLEMS AS UNEMPLOYMENT, NATIONAL SECURITYWN THE EXPANSION OF COMMUNIST TERRORISM AND CRIME IN THE STREETS. HE CRITICIZED CONTINUED SUBSIDIZATION OF MENY LOSING STATE ENTERPRISES. BUNCHU WAS EXERCISING THE OPPOSITION'S RIGHT TO OPPOSE AND HE DID IT VIGOROUSLY BUT AN OBJECTIVE CRITIC MIGHT NOTE THAT THE SAME OBJECTIONS BUNCHU RAISED TO THIS BUDGET COULD HAVE BEEN RAISED TO HIS OWN BUDGET THE PREVIOUS YEAR. THE BREAKDOWN OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING FOR 1977 WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN IN REFAIR.

WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Authority: greeneet
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